

STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH 13, 1956



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MARCH 13, 1904

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BERGEN-PASSAIC EXPRESSWAY

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On Wednesday, March 7, I visited WOR studios in New York and recorded a half-hour interview with Frank Singiser (staff news commentator) re: the Bergen-Passaic Expressway. In the interview all phases of the route were discussed including description, definition of a freeway, our policy on line adoption, cost, sources of funds, accident records, and the present overloading of Routes 4 and 46, enhancement of ratables, the right of eminent domain and its application, and our land acquisition policy. No reference was made to the double-decking of the George Washington Bridge for obvious reasons. (Clippings on a portion of the broadcast are attached.)

Assuring ourselves of the opportunity to put our "Best foot forward", we were permitted to frame the questions used in the interview. It is planned to use portions of the half hour recording - about five minutes each night - over five to six news broadcasts at 10 p. m., starting Thursday, March 8.

As a further measure to "soften" resistance, as you know the Port Authority plans to reach various agencies with additional material pointing to the manifold advantages of early expressway construction - we hope.

In view of your intimate knowledge of Senator Jones' recent statement regarding legislation on the Expressway and the double-decking of the George Washington Bridge, this phase of developments is not incorporated in the report.

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RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

Following your suggestion, the Paterson people (Mayor O'Byrne, Freeholder Graves, etc.) proceeded to the Highway Department after meeting with you on February 21. At that time we showed them (to no avail) program in a paper read before the annual convention of the Association of Highway Officials of the North Atlantic States on March 2. Other states showed great interest in our work and copies of the paper were distributed. 44,114 vehicles a day out of a total of 51,488 (at the point of maximum volume) would be local traffic which otherwise would ^{be} forced to use city streets. 6, 7, and 8 representatives of this Department visited Cornell, Union and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to recruit additional young engineers from the crop scheduled for June graduation. The visit to Cornell was especially "profitable".

SIGNS

Senator Stout, municipal officials, and other officers of the Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce visited us on Friday, March 9, to discuss changes in our signs which would better regulate traffic entering that resort. Although their requests were based on overhead signs (a very expensive installation) we were able to show them how the same job could be more economically accomplished with larger off-the-road signs. Also they agreed with our concept of limiting destinations on any one sign to two, even to the point of the Mayor of Neptune agreeing to drop that municipality from the present signs. As is so often the case in all sections of the state, these people had good constructive suggestions to make. More recent Chamber of Commerce and other official expressions are and were more than pleased at our willingness to cooperate. Senator Stout expressed his complete satisfaction. Incidentally, we arranged

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In an effort to "spread the gospel" on recruiting, the Department's personnel director outlined our recruitment and on-the-job training program in a paper read before the annual convention of the Association of Highway Officials of the North Atlantic States on March 2. Other states showed great interest in our work and copies of the paper were distributed.

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SIGNS, cont'd

for the Garden State Parkway to be represented so Senator Stout and his shore people had complete coverage.

SALARY ADJUSTMENTS

Complete real estate maps showing in detail the limits of state property holdings. For over a year we have been collecting data and completing tests of all aspects of the problem which were anticipated at our meeting with Senator Forbes' Adjustment Committee, we have prepared several charts showing comparisons of present and proposed state salaries with private employment. This has been done for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labor and supervision as well as for various engineering categories and graphically shows the gap we are endeavoring to close. The completed charts were taken to Civil Service to show them what could be done. They were most enthusiastic and are now preparing similar exhibits.

ROUTE 206 (Columbus)

On the evening of February 23 several of us made one of our frequent community visits to explain proposed highway improvements to the people. This time to Columbus, where we met to discuss the Route 206 by-pass. Senator McCay and Assemblyman Haines were among the 150 or so in attendance. As a result of our discussions we are investigating the possibility of carrying the proposed by-pass farther eastward around the town rather than through a portion of it. This may well be another example of the benefit of "on the spot" planning prior to determining a route's alignment. In this connection we plan to use honeysuckle now being removed in areas where we are constructing "creeper lanes" and plant it in some of our center islands. Besides eliminating mowing, the vines should grow to a height

STONE, cont'd

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ROUTE 205 (Columbus)

On the evening of February 23 several of us made one of our frequent community visits to explain proposed highway improvements to the people. This time to Columbus, where we met to discuss the Route 205 by-pass. Senator McGay and Assemblyman Haines were among the 150 or so in attendance. As a result of our discussions we are investigating the possibility of carrying the proposed by-pass farther eastward around the town rather than through a portion of it. This may well be another example of the benefit of "on the spot" planning prior to determining a route's alignment. At the same time, it is hoped that the people will be more interested in the project and will be more willing to cooperate. Senator McGay expressed his interest in the project. He suggested

REAL ESTATE

For many years this Department has been devoid of a sound policy re: excess parcels of real estate, monumenting right-of-way and preparation and filing of complete real estate maps showing in detail the limits of state property holdings. For over a year we have been collecting data and completing tests of all aspects of the problem which were recently crystalized at a meeting attended by our real estate, engineering, maintenance and legal people.

We made some headway on these matters. In the future General Property Parcel Maps for each project will be filed in the proper county recording offices immediately upon completion. These maps will be kept up to date as changes occur.

Monumenting in the future will be made a part of the construction contracts and will be placed at reference points outside of the curb line on both sides of the highway. Final locations of these monuments will be shown on our "as-built" plans. Many factors complicate the excess parcel decision we must make and we are continuing our studies prior to the final "wrap-up".

CENTER ISLAND EXPERIMENTS

We are endeavoring to reduce our annual mowing costs wherever possible while at the same time improving the appearance of our roads. In this connection we plan to use honeysuckle now being removed in areas where we are constructing "creeper lanes" and plant it in some of our center islands. Besides eliminating mowing, the vines should grow to a height

CENTER ISLAND EXPERIMENTS, cont'd

sufficient to reduce headlight glare. In other islands we will allow grass to grow high in an attempt to re-establish native shrub and small tree growth by natural seeding. During the coming summer all other grass islands will be cut no lower than 2 1/2 - 3 1/2 inches to combat dry spell "brown-out".

CONSTRUCTION

Bids on \$112,507.30 of construction were received since February 14, 1955, as follows:

Mar. 6 - Palisades Parkway, Planting	\$ 18,664.00
Mar. 6 - Rt. U. S. 9-W, Fort Lee, Planting	10,247.95
Mar. 6 - Rt. 58, Newark, Planting	8,869.25
Mar. 13 - U. S. 202, Lambertville	<u>74,726.10</u>
	\$ 112,507.30

Advertisements have been placed for the following projects:

Mar. 20 - Rt. 3, Fender Reconstruction, Hackensack River Bridge.
Mar. 27 - Aerial Surveys - northern section.
Mar. 27 - Aerial Surveys - southern section.
Apr. 13 - Rt. 21 - Newark - Planting.
Apr. 13 - U. S. 202, Sec. 1-B - Paving.

NORTH-SOUTH ROUTE (HOBOKEN)

On February 23 we met with Austin Tobin of the Port of New York Authority, General Wanamaker of the Turnpike, and their engineers to review the Turnpike's plans re: continuation of the Newark Bay Extension beyond 12th Street, Jersey City. As a result of this gathering it was agreed that the Highway Department would look into a possible line between the Paterson Plank Road and the Lincoln Tunnel which would enable us to join up with the Turnpike's present plans. To this end we employed a consultant who will submit a report on or about March 15. In the event no feasible alignment can be found to continue the Turnpike's proposed extension northward, revisions in their present plans will have to be made.

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